

Chapter 10

MORaine SECTION

The Moraine section is the area north of Southern Boulevard and west of Fairmount Avenue. Part of the section lies in the terminal moraine of the Wisconsin glacier that retreated about 15,000 years ago. The land, dry along the ridge, slopes downward to the west from Fairmount Avenue, becoming wetter as it approaches the power line right-of-way and the Fairmount Country Club. Even though the land rises as you go north of Southern Boulevard wetlands, springs and ponds are to be found throughout.

The high school, emergency squad building, a fire house, churches, Cougar Field, and Southern Boulevard school are located in the Moraine section. Southern Boulevard school constructed a large stormwater detention basin which has been developed as a natural habitat for plants and animals and has become a valuable educational resource.

Colony Pool, formerly part of a retreat for a community of urban residents, is adjacent to the power line right-of-way. It is spring-fed and is only one of several ponds and springs in the area. The right-of-way although heavily disturbed still contains pockets of wetlands that act as habitat for birds and some native plants such as goldenrod. Wetlands behind Gloria Dei church on Shunpike Road are protected by a conservation easement and wetlands behind Cougar Field are owned by Chatham Township.

The drier area of half-acre residential lots between Lafayette Avenue and the golf course includes land that was formerly used for dairy farms and a racetrack. Sewers replaced septic tanks in this area in the 1960s. The golf course includes several pockets of wetlands. The Township-owned parcel, protected by a conservation easement, next to Shunpike Field contains one large vernal pool where wood frogs have been known to breed. The parcel has been undisturbed for over 30 years and has developed into a habitat for several native plants.

Sunset Lake, mostly spring-fed, also receives stormwater runoff from housing on slopes across the border in Madison. An incident of hazardous waste being discharged into a nearby storm drain in Madison resulted in an expensive cleanup of Sunset Lake. For several years remediation was on-going for leakage from an underground fuel tank at the former Hickory Tree garage, now the location of Juniper Village. Gas stations at Hickory Tree are monitored by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. A small plot of land on Southern Boulevard adjacent to the golf course contains an aircraft radio beacon which continuously transmits Morse code for the letters C-A-T, sometimes audible on your car's AM radio as you pass.

OPEN SPACE

Township-owned open space in the Moraine section includes Shunpike Field, the parcel next to Shunpike Field to the east, the Colony Pool recreation area, property on school grounds, fire company property on Southern Boulevard, Cougar Field, and Woodland Park next to Cougar Field. Other open areas, privately owned, lie on church property, along the power lines, and between Ferndale Avenue and Long Hill Chapel. The golf course could also be considered open space.